CPS HR CONSULTING

Action Plan: Recommendations - Key Drivers to Improve

Surveying employees and reviewing your results is only the start of the process. The real reward is identifying and taking steps to improve engagement.

The Action Plan Recommendations Report will help you conduct action planning by providing suggestions on actions you may take in response to your survey results. The recommendations report suggestions are for the key survey questions for your organization.

We identify these questions for improvement based on the key driver analysis. While you should decide what will work best in your organization, these suggestions and resources can help you develop an action plan. This report includes the following sections:

Understanding the Question – this section provides a high-level understanding of the survey question and why it is important.

Thought Starters – it is important to first understand the issues behind the results for a specific question. This section includes several thought-starter questions to help you think about possible root causes.

Action Plan Steps – this section lists possible actions to consider for your action plan. These suggestions are based on our research and experience.

Additional Resources

The "Action Plan Resources List" (available as a PDF download below) is meant to be used in conjunction with the Action Plan Recommendations to develop possible solutions. This document lists guides, templates, checklists, articles, videos, books, and other resources. to help you develop additional action-planning ideas.

- ***Guides, Templates, Checklists, and Other Resources –*** these resources contain step-by-step instructions, lists of ideas, customizable templates, or other types of practical ideas linked to specific survey dimensions or questions.

- ***Videos –*** short videos by thought leaders (e.g., TED Talks) cover ideas relevant to a survey question category.

- ***Articles –*** resources with ideas to address specific survey dimensions or questions.

- ***Books*** – these can be used to further develop your expertise on the issue (e.g., after you develop your action plan). Listed books often cover many areas in a particular survey question category.

CPS HR Training Courses – training resources offered by CPS HR. To learn more about course availability, visit the CPS HR Training Center home page: Training Center | CPS HR Consulting CPS HR offers a variety of delivery formats including virtual training, open-enrollment programs, on-site training and hosted sessions.

1. I feel that the City as a whole is managed well

Understanding the Question

People want to work in organizations that they feel are operating effectively, are delivering high-quality services and are making a difference. Employees are more likely to feel the organization is managed well when it has a clear mission and measurable goals; and consistent, direct, and transparent communication on issues affecting employees and the organization.

Thought Starters

- Have major organizational changes occurred recently that may have influenced answers to this question?
- Have employees made specific comments about leadership and the direction they think the organization is going?
- Does the organization have a clear mission and specific measurable goals to assess performance and success?
- How, and how well, does management communicate key decisions and reasons for major changes?

Action Plan Steps

- Ensure the organization has a clear and widely communicated mission statement.
- Create and report on specific and measurable goals and objectives for the organization.
- Ensure there is alignment between senior leaders and other leaders (i.e., managers, supervisors and lead workers) on strategies, goals and tactics. This alignment will enhance leadership credibility.
- Hold regular meetings with employees to discuss relevant updates and changes. Make sure employees who can't attend are updated.
- Create a formal process to communicate important changes across the organization.
- Pay particular attention to communicating with employees who are more difficult to reach (e.g., who work in the field or on late shifts).
- Create a process to regularly assess communication needs and effectiveness (e.g., through pulse surveys or focus groups).

2.

City leaders create a positive workplace culture

Understanding the Question

Senior leaders typically set the tone for culture in their organization. Beyond employee engagement, an organization's culture can affect many operational aspects of an organization such as: willingness to collaborate between work groups and openness or acceptance of change.

Thought Starters

- Do employees view senior leaders as approachable?
- Are senior leaders encouraged to be positive and friendly role models?
- Does your organization have an open-door policy or similar policy?
- How frequently do senior leaders directly interact with rank-and-file employees?

Action Plan Steps

- Have senior leaders promote an environment of open communication where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas, concerns, and feedback.
- Encourage senior leaders to meet with employees further down in the organization such as front-line employees.
- Consider having senior leaders publicly recognize and appreciate the contributions and achievements of employees.
- Have regular all-hands meetings where all employees are invited to hear senior leaders discuss important topics that affect the entire organization.
- Leverage different forms of communication (email, paper) as ways of connecting senior leaders with employees. Examples of these types of communications includes a monthly newsletter.

3.

I believe City leaders care about employee well-being

Understanding the Question

Senior leaders typically set the tone for culture in their organization. Employees who believe senior leaders in their organization care about their well-being tend to also believe that those same senior leaders have an employee's best interest at heart.

Thought Starters

- Do senior leaders communicate the importance of employee well-being and health?
- Does your organization have programs in place that encourage healthy behaviors?
- Does your organization utilize an employee assistance program and is it encouraged by senior leaders?
- How often is well-being and health discussed in your organization?

Action Plan Steps

- If applicable, have senior leaders promote mental health resources your organization might already offer.
- Recognize and reward behavior that contribute to physical and mental well-being.
- Encourage work-life balance by having senior leaders encourage boundaries around work hours and the taking breaks.
- Foster a culture of support and compassion where employees feel comfortable discussing personal challenges or seeking help when needed.
- Consider providing training on well-being.

4. Compared to people doing a similar job in other organizations, I feel my pay is reasonable

Understanding the Question

Perceptions of pay fairness may be based on employees comparing their pay to others in the organization or to positions outside the organization. If employees perceive that they are paid fairly they will be more likely to focus on their work, and also stay with their current employer.

Thought Starters

- Does the organization have a clearly defined compensation philosophy (market-based; based on performance, skills, longevity, collective bargaining; across-the-board increases, bonus opportunities, etc.).
- What factors may be influencing perceptions of pay unfairness?
- How does the organization ensure that employees doing comparable work are paid comparably (i.e., there is internal equity)?
- Has the organization completed an external market compensation study recently?
- Do employees understand the value of their total compensation package (i.e., direct pay plus the value of benefits)?
- Does the organization analyze employee compensation to identify and correct inequities (e.g., gender-based)?

Action Plan Steps

- Identify and communicate the organization's compensation philosophy.
- Consider conducting an external market compensation comparison study. Broadly communicate the study process and results.
- Consider conducting an internal compensation equity study to determine whether jobs of comparable worth are being compensated comparably.
- Examine job classifications to determine if jobs have changed substantially and, if so, whether compensation should also be adjusted.
- Analyze pay levels (including increases) to determine if there are pay inequities (e.g., gender-based).
- Quantify the value of benefits and communicate the value of employees' total compensation.

5. I feel that my pay adequately reflects my performance

Understanding the Question

This question provides insight into how clearly employees see the link between their pay and their performance. If employees believe that they will be fairly rewarded for performance and results, they are likely to be more motivated to achieve those results.

Thought Starters

- Are responses to this question based on employees comparing their pay to others within the organization or to employees doing similar work in external organizations?
- What methods does the organization use to set pay (e.g., is pay based on collective bargaining agreements, tenure, performance, the market)?
- Does the organization explicitly link compensation to performance?
- Has the organization done a market compensation study recently?
- Are responses to this question linked to base compensation, bonuses or pay raises (or lack of raises)?
- Does the performance evaluation/management system effectively distinguish different performance levels?
- Are responses to this question correlated with employee tenure? That is, do the responses reflect newer employees comparing their pay to that of longer-tenured employees in the same positions? Newer employees may perceive they are performing at a higher level than longer-tenured employees who may be paid more simply because they have been with the organization longer.

Action Plan Steps

- Consider linking pay more closely to performance and/or new skills acquired.
- Communicate the organization's policies and processes to set and adjust pay, including whether there is flexibility to adjust pay based on performance.
- For employees at the maximum of their pay ranges, consider alternatives to pay raises (e.g., lump-sum payments, paid-time off).
- Ensure that the performance evaluation/management system distinguishes among levels of employee performance and that managers/supervisors are making these distinctions.
- Ensure that managers/supervisors are discussing pay with their individual employees, including whether there are opportunities for increases.
- Work with employees to create plans for development and possible advancement.
- Consider providing employees with data on the value of their total compensation (i.e., including the value of employee benefits). This can provide a more realistic view of compensation, particularly in comparison to outside organizations.
- Consider doing a market study to assess whether compensation is competitive. This can be done for specific positions if the employee concerns seem to be in specific work units or positions.